



## Aruba's "Historical Heritage" is expressed in art and cinema

In 2001 a commission was formed to explore methods of educating the public to Aruba's historical heritage, and in April of 2006 the Fundacion Herencia Historico was founded. On Thursday morning and evening, the board of the foundation, consisting of Lucia Kelly, president, Olinda Rasmijn, secretary and Susan de Lange, treasurer welcomed the press and public to a preview of their accomplishments and the opening of an art exposition.

The exposition can now be viewed in the chapel of the Instituto di Cultura where the works of fourteen Aruban artists are on display daily until Friday, October 13. The theme of the art exhibition is the same as the first of three films that have been produced by the foundation at a cost of 100,000 Aruban florins, which they received from UNOCA. "Periodo Indjan" deals with the ceramic and pre-ceramic period when the Arawak Indians were the native population of Aruba, and the paintings depict many aspects of their life and culture both in realistic and abstract techniques.

The film, the first of three twenty minute movies that tell the history of Aruba before the establishment of the Lago Refinery in the late twenties, will be screened at various community centers around the island over the month of October. These presentations are free of charge and will take place from 8:00 to 10:00 PM. The subject matter deals with the historical artifacts that have been uncovered at various digs around Aruba and what they reveal to archeologists about the daily life and spiritual beliefs of the Arawak Indians. A number of historical scholars such as Vi Frank and Gerard van Buirt appear in the film. The film also enlightens about the Indian names of many of the Aruban locales, and the various Indian paintings to be found around the island. The second and third films deal with the periods when the Spanish and Dutch occupied Aruba.

The films were produced with the cooperation of the Biblioteca Nacional, the Museo Arqueologico, the Instituto di Cultura and UNOCA. Eventually they will be incorporated into the school curriculum by the Department of Education.

The screening will take place at the Centro di Bario Noord on Tuesday, October 10; the Centro di Bario Playa Pabao on Friday, October 13; the Centro San Martin in Santa Cruz on Tuesday, October 17; and at the Centro di Bario Brazil on Thursday, October 19. A staff member of the Museo Arqueologico will be present at the showings to answer questions afterwards.

The art exposition was a fitting beginning for this project; the works by the various artists present a fascinating pastiche of Indian life, and modern interpretation of their native art. Many artists used the earthy red hues of the natural clay of Aruban soil, which can be seen in a display by Olinda Rasmijn of objects that were an everyday part of the native life, to express a mystique and atmosphere in their paintings. The exposition hall is located in the courtyard next to the Saint Francisco Church by the post office in Oranjestad, and is well worth the trip for those that are interested in the history and culture of Aruba.

For more information about "Nos Herencia Historico," the screenings, and the art exhibition, call telephone numbers 587-4759, 593-4186, or 585-6019.